

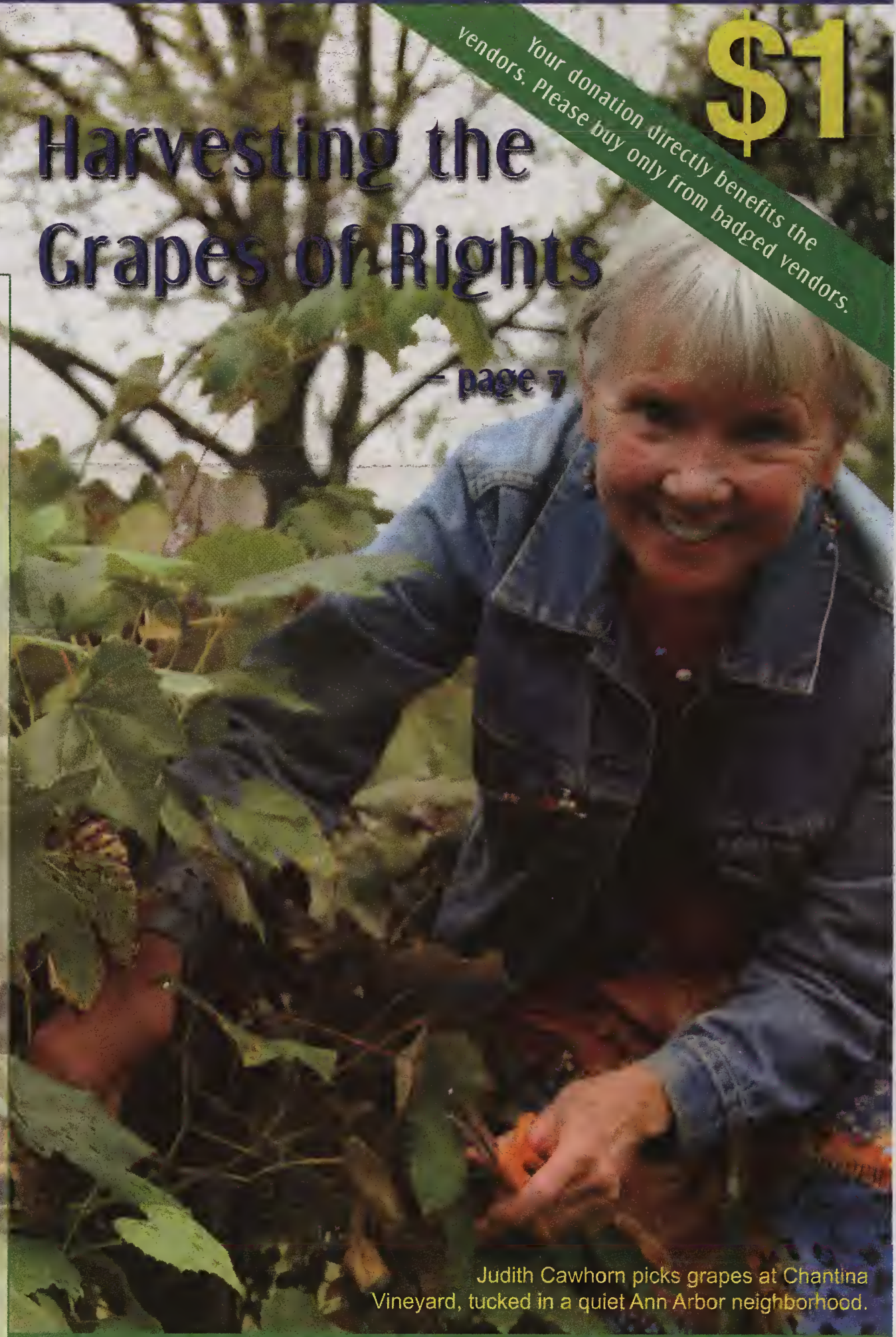


GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

OCTOBER 2010

VOLUME ONE • ISSUE THREE



Harvesting the Grapes of Rights

\$1
Your donation directly benefits the vendors. Please buy only from badged vendors.

- page 7

INSIDE

Will county plan to pool funding hurt nonprofits? - p. 2

Understanding transsexuals - p. 3

Delonis Center - Next best thing to home for some - p. 4

Dumpster Diving for dinner - p. 4

Progressive Kick may be the deciding factor in the 2010 elections - p. 5

On My Corner - Vendor Rissa finds healing with a can-do attitude - p. 6

Ann Arbor woman makes it in Chicago's best blues clubs - p. 9

Meat makes it onto the menu with Eat Local, Eat Natural - p. 11

Writing cover letters too soon - p. 12

Ann Arbor City Map - p. 12

Judith Cawhorn picks grapes at Chantina Vineyard, tucked in a quiet Ann Arbor neighborhood.

www.groundcovernews.com

GROUNDCOVER NEWS MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

Susan Beckett, Publisher
contact@groundcovernews.com

Laurie Lounsbury, Editor
editor@groundcovernews.com

Contributors:

David KE Dodge
Karen L. Totten
Christopher Alexander
Marquise Williams
Danielle Mack

Letters to the Editor:

editor@groundcovernews.com

Story or Photo Submissions:

submissions@groundcovernews.com

www.groundcovernews.com
Washtenaw County, Michigan



Susan Beckett
Publisher

It's working, thanks to you!

It's the spring in the step, glint in the eye, purposeful set to the shoulders; the demeanor of Groundcover vendors lets us

know that we are making a difference.

There are now six vendors that organize their days around selling the newspaper and are using that discipline to take control of their lives. In this month's "On My Corner" you can read about Rissa who considers selling part of her physical ther-

apy. There are other vendors who thrive on the human contact that comes with selling person to person, some who love the challenge of selling and some who love being an integral part of an organization that gives a voice to the housing insecure.

Selling papers is hard work. A vendor can spend five hours on the street and sell only 15 papers, ending up with an aching back, sore feet and just over \$11. It takes real dedication to keep going in those circumstances.

Of course there are other times when the papers fly out of their hands so fast they can hardly keep up with demand. And there are those customers who take a personal interest in "their" vendor, often leaving generous tips and taking the time to converse. Over and over the vendors sing the praises of you, our customers, noting how interesting you are, how you can be trusted to come back when you've said you will return, and how generous you are with praise for the paper. Thank you!

Publisher's note:

Groundcover News was established for the express purpose of serving the needs of low-income members of our community. We consider it our responsibility to report on issues that directly impact the economically vulnerable. Many of our readers are voicing concerns over changes being proposed to the distribution model for funding some local non-profit organizations. Already, federal and state funding for low-income housing and services for most of the Washtenaw County municipalities has been pooled into a single fund called the

Washtenaw Urban County Committee.

The intent now is to integrate most current funding organizations; for example, Washtenaw Urban County Committee, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Washtenaw County government, City of Ann Arbor, and the Washtenaw United Way, into one distribution board. The hope is that unification will improve efficiencies in dispensing funds.

One major concern has been that the proposed changes in allocation will favor large or well-established organizations and new or small nonprofits will get pushed aside.

Officials proposing the change have responded to this criticism by saying the new system will be an improvement over the current structure. What is clear is that millions of dollars in funding is at stake.

Those proposing this change, and community organizers criticizing the proposal, have agreed to speak with our writers about the projected change. We will look closely and fairly at both sides of this issue and report later how we feel the interests of our community would best be served. In the interim, we've agreed to print the letter below from one of our readers about her apprehension over the proposal.

Letter to the Editor

Will new union help or hinder small nonprofits?

"Homeless" means "No home." The basic tactic to solve this issue is to build more homes. While tracking the housing funds in Ann Arbor, I landed myself in "Urban County Meetings." Ann Arbor joined Urban County last year; all the Housing funds and most Human Services Fund go there.

Before discussing housing, the hot issue this month is the "Coordinated Funding Initiative." Actually, Ann Arbor is already practicing "coordinated funding." We did pool federal, county, and city funds together, then allocated them to nonprofits. This new model adds two big nonprofits, United Way and the AA Area Community Foundation to the funding pool. Now, I offer some questions to challenge your brains.

1. The Office of Community Development takes 10-20 percent administration cost out of about \$2.6 million in annual funds. If the United Way and AA Area Community Foundation join the group, how much administration cost will be spent? They both have around 12-14 staff. They also hire extra staff to deal with the big pool of money and a consultant company to find other nonprofits with best outcomes to fund. What will be the total

administrative cost?

2. Will small and new nonprofits be excluded? How much money will be left for the nonprofits?

3. In the past, three people from city, three people from county and three people from the Office of Community Development (OCD) reviewed the fund. If this new model accepted, how many people will supervise this big pool of money?

4. If public and private/business donations join together, will there be confusion?

5. Two big nonprofits will not be a decision-makers. Funds will be allocated based on the recommendations from OCD and voted on at Urban County Meetings. However, the Urban County Exec board has administrative power over the OCD, leading to questions about the independence of the Urban County board's decision-making. Will the allocations of such big money be fair and best serve our needy residents or will the decision-making be concentrated in the hands of a few people and the assets be distributed to only a subset of the needy?

A picture comes to my mind, where a big ship with two captains is navigating along a big river. This big liner can't reach the small streams, and fewer small boats are around to float easily through those small

streams and get goods to the people. The big ship dominates the market and only serves the big ports.

Another picture pops up, where we are making a super store by putting Meijer, Kroger, Home Depot, Macdonald's and JC Penny together. The superstore personnel are struggling in their united offices to work out how to put out the merchandise from Home Depot and the fresh fruits from Kroger in a way that serves the needs of their customers. I see a man spending two hours searching this mega-store to buy two tomatoes.

The idea and intention of this new model are worth applauding; however, we need to be careful about the pitfalls in the process. The poverty rate is rising. I show my love for my friends in desperate situations by getting more funded money for them and I don't want to see that funding jeopardized.

I don't want to overwhelm you here. If you want to know more, please go to www.annarborchronicle.com and search "Coordinated Funding Initiative." If you are a small nonprofit or want to serve the community and love your neighbor, you mustn't overlook this issue. Good Luck!

Lily Au
Ann Arbor



Walking distance from the Stadium
Roos Roast Retail and Roasting. Warm
up after a cool game at Roos Roast.

locations: 1155 Rosewood St., Suite B,
Ann Arbor 734.222-9202
Open M.T.Th.F. 9 AM Till 5 PM and
football Saturdays. Open at the
Farmer's Market Saturday and
Wednesday morning.

D's Time - Let's talk transsexual

You may have noticed some people out there walking around our quaint little town of Ann Arbor that seem more unique than most. I am talking about those people where you think to yourself "Is that a he or a she?" This would be people of the Transgendered community. My name is D, I live in downtown Ann Arbor and I am a Transsexual woman. It is my hope and goal to educate the public about the transgendered community, and maybe even provide some valuable information for those going through similar experiences in their lives.

The state of Michigan is home to three of the United States' top 20 surgeons for Gender Reassignment Surgery. Two of those three top surgeons are here at our beloved University of Michigan. This is just one reason Ann Arbor is bound to see more than it's fair share of transsexual individuals. Because Ann Arbor also has a very large Gay, and Lesbian (G, and L respectively) population that is very receptive of the Transgendered (T) community, some may come here for a year or two have the surgery and just decide to stay.

Please do not get the G and L community mixed up with the T community, there are similarities but they are very different groups of people. Whatever it is that draws people here, it is important to acknowledge that Ann Arbor is home to this very prominent demographic of individuals who deserve to have their voices heard, understood and respected.

Please remember that people from this community are people with feelings, hopes and dreams just like anyone else. They can be offended by comments, actions, and words – and quite often are offended by uneducated people asking, saying, or doing something inappropriate towards them. I hope my writing will help you act respectfully toward this community.

Definitions

Lets define who is who, what is what, and simple basic courtesies to be observed with each group within this community. The term Transgendered is used by most people to refer to all gender variant expressions. Transgendered can be used to refer to Cross Dressers/Tomboys, Transvestites, Transexuals individually and/or as a group. No matter what group the person comes from, odds are really high they just want to blend in and be accepted as the gender in which they present themselves.

Okay. Admit it. You have in your life, en-

countered a moment where you questioned someone's gender. Perhaps it was during a stroll down the street where you happened to catch the glimpse of a person's posture out of the corner of your eye and have to do a double take. Or perhaps you found yourself engaged in a conversation and gradually began to wonder about the person you are talking to.

Curiosity is part of our human nature and far too often, it can spark some ridiculously insensitive questions. Remember that the person you see or you are talking to is exactly the identity they are projecting. You can save yourself a lot of headache, and hurt feelings, by simply treating the person accordingly, even letting them integrate as much as possible. Treat them and try to think of them as no different than any other guy or girl, based on how they are presenting themselves to you and the rest of the world.

It may be helpful to have a basic outline of how various individuals in the transgender community define themselves. This will help you better understand why some questions you see as normal may be offensive and also give you some answers so that you won't need to ask those embarrassing questions.

There are four specific expressions used that transgender individuals and groups identify with.

Cross Dressers

This term typically refers to men who wear women's clothes. This is usually not done on a regular basis. These men are typically happy with their bodies the way they are and have no interest in permanently changing their gender. Cross Dressing is simply a means of self-expression, or an extension of their wardrobe. These men will sometimes even go so far as to give themselves a girls name while dressed as a woman. However, most of these guys are heterosexual and some are even happily married. They may even like to go out in public from time to time "dressed" as a woman. Some women find this sort of man more attractive, saying that he is willing to be the man of the house, do things most men do, but that he shows more of an attraction to some household chores. Wives have told me that their cross dressing husbands are typically not big-time drinkers, and that they tend to have more in common with them than most men.

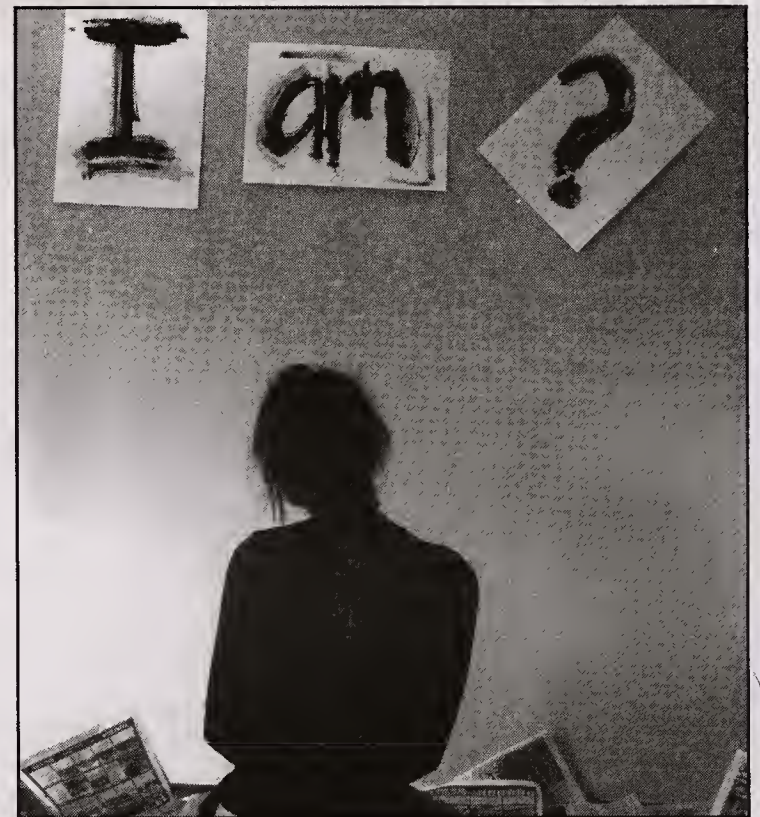
Think of this type of man more as a LARPer (Live Action Role Player) that

prefers to role-play as a woman from time to time. The female persona he is presenting is his character. While a man is "role-playing" his female self, the correct way to address "him" is to get in character with him and in essence play along. Refer to him as you would a woman, using female pronouns unless he specifically asks you not to.

Just be sure to pay close attention because there are men out there that just like to wear women's clothing and are not as concerned with presentation. If the person has breasts (fake or not), and some makeup on, then they are probably trying to be true to character, and should be treated as such.

Tomboys

This is a tricky one that will be very hard to pin down. A lot of women just find men's clothes more comfortable, just as some men find women's clothes more comfortable and/or a better fit. Women under this



Transsexuals just want to blend in and be accepted.

heading can be straight, lesbian or bisexual. This group really has no hard and fast rules that I am aware of or have been able to find. They tend to blend into society much better and are more widely accepted. The simplest rule of thumb for this particular group is that if a woman has gone so far as to bind her breasts down to look more like a guy and has a more masculine hair cut, play it safe and refer to "her" as a guy using male pronouns, unless told otherwise.

To be continued in an upcoming issue

GETTING TO KNOW GROUNDCOVER

Coming soon to corners near your favorite stores, restaurants and churches are local people working to establish themselves economically, selling *Groundcover – News and Solutions from the Ground Up*. This street newspaper, published monthly, contains an eclectic mix of material with a broad range of appeal. It is sold exclusively by members of the greater homeless community.

The newspaper costs \$1 and the seller reaps a net profit of 75 cents on each paper. Certified vendors will be wearing nametags with their name and Groundcover ID number. Experienced vendors will also sport black vending aprons screened with the Groundcover logo.

When you see a Groundcover vendor, please stop, ask about the paper and its content, and buy one. The paper is about establishing commerce in social interaction as

well as route to self-sufficiency.

Groundcover is also seeking articles, stories and cartoons from the community. A religion page will be a regular feature and we encourage the writers among you to offer reflections on current events and issues from a religious perspective. Along with event notices and advertising requests, send material to submissions@groundcovernews.com.

Please talk about the paper and help your friends and neighbors recognize certified vendors. Encourage them and guests in our city to reach out and patronize those who are working to overcome their current unfortunate circumstances. Many of us are lucky enough to have a safety net of family and friends to help us through difficult times. Sometimes, we need to extend our concept of friends and family to help those who have no one else.

MAKING CHANGE

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

A home for the homeless - Ann Arbor's Delonis Center

By Ike Staple

First and foremost I would like to introduce myself: My name is Ike. I've been working with Groundcover for about five weeks and I really like it. I've been living at the Delonis Center, the tan brick building on Huron just west of Ashley in downtown Ann Arbor, for quite some time now. It's a place for the homeless of Washtenaw County to stay until they can find a place of their own. As far as I know, it is one of the best homeless shelters to live in.

During the week, two meals a day are served in the Community Kitchen (Operated by Food Gatherers) located on the ground floor of the Center. All are welcome to come in and eat. On the weekends there is one meal served at 3:00 pm. People living at Delonis can also get a quick breakfast from a cart on the residence floors in the morning.

A person can live at Delonis on the residence floors for a period of time, usually not more than 90 days. How long depends on their situation. During that time they live in a room with three other people on floors that are separated by sex. They are

responsible for making their beds and tidying up each morning. Everyone has to leave the floors with bedrooms by 7:30 in the morning and generally cannot return to sleeping floors until after 5:00 pm, but can be on the second floor receiving services. Some beds are located on the sec-

"It is not like having a home, but it is much better than living on the street."

— Ike Staple, Delonis Center resident

ond floor and are cots placed on that floor at 5 pm. There is a locker assigned to each bed. Twenty-one men can occupy these beds. There is one private room on the 2nd floor that is used during the day as a sleeping area for people who work the midnight shift and four women can use

these "day beds" at night. This expansion of going from 50 to 75 beds happened last December.

Those waiting for beds join those who are not from Washtenaw County, who are limited to a two-week stay, on the first floor each night where they sleep on yoga-type mats. The second floor service center opens at 7:30 am, once the beds have been cleared with all the bedding and possessions moved into the lockers.

There are computers on the service floor that residents and others can use to prepare resumes and submit job applications. There is also a computer class for those who don't know anything about computers. Use of the computers is restricted to specific times and only for the purpose of finding employment.

There are also washing machines on the service floor that anyone can use. You have to sign up to use them on the days reserved for your floor. Non-Residents can access laundry and showers. These are open at specific times for non-residents. Showers are limited to 15 minutes for non-residents. People who can't get a room at Delonis often still get help with

finding jobs and blankets or tents. During really bad weather, the dining room gets converted into a temporary warming shelter during the night so people don't have to stay outside. There is also a church-rotating shelter where men can stay for the night from November until April.

After becoming a residential client of the Delonis Center, you are assigned a case manager to help you with your issues. They help with logistics like getting bus tokens so you can get where you need to be, getting the right paperwork filled out for assistance, finding an apartment and basic furniture and finding work.

A yoga class is offered once a week in the morning but there are no exercise or recreational facilities. There is a television available on all sleeping floors at night after about 5:00 pm (5:45pm for the second floor). A balcony off the dining room is a space where people can pass some time and have a smoke. There are smoke rooms on all the floors so residents do not have to go outside to smoke in the evening. There are a lot of rules and it is not like having a home, but it is much better than living on the street.

Dumpster Diving - Finding good food in bad places

By Karen L. Totten

Loaves of whole wheat bread and frozen pizzas. Cartons of unbroken eggs. Packages of cheddar cheese. Crowns of broccoli. High protein bars. Bags of limes and lemons. Salmon. Brisket. It is surprising what can be found discarded as waste in a grocery store dumpster on a typical night of food reclamation in Ann Arbor.

For some, such reclaimed food is ambrosia. It means supper. For others it is economic necessity—making the grocery dollars stretch and securing enough to feed a family. And every rescued box of salvaged food is another chunk of refuse that doesn't wind up in a landfill. In fact, nationwide a whole lifestyle has emerged around the "freegan" philosophy, a group which looks to offset the impact of food waste. And they have plenty of pickings. Some accounts state that in countries like the U.S., 40 to 50 % of food is thrown away.

These are a few of the reasons 18 year old Ann Arbor high school graduate Forrest provides for why, in the middle of the night, he hoists himself into the prove-nance found in those big metal dumpsters

found behind most stores and businesses.

It's clear, however, that dumpster diving, also called "binning," or "skipping" in the U.K., isn't a lark that this young adult is doing for kicks. Forrest has been called Santa Claus for his distributing food out of the back of his car to un-housed people around the city. "You go where people hang out, throw open the trunk and let them choose what they want," he says.

According to those who work with un-housed populations, approximately several thousand persons are currently without permanent homes in the Ann Arbor area. Of the organized food service providers, at

least two provide daily meals: St. Andrews Church on Division provides a breakfast for anyone who is in need, and Food Gatherers Community Kitchen within the De-

lonis Center prepares a lunch and nightly meal. Between them, these organizations can feed hundreds of people on a daily basis. However, there are many people in need who slip through the cracks, for various reasons.

Forrest knows a loose group, not organized, of about 10-15 people who regularly dumpster dive, and there are plenty of divers around from differing backgrounds. He ran into a guy one night pulling out items for his daughter's school lunch. "Hey, I found cheese sticks!" he called out excitedly. Lukas, another

diver from Ann Arbor, who has been "dumpstering" about 50 or more times over the last year and a half, said one night recently he encountered 15 people just at one bin. "You had to wait in line," he said. Organized groups exist in many large cities nationwide, and the Michigan Daily ran a piece about a year ago on one student co-op in town which prepares all their meals from reclaimed food.

Although food is a primary dumpster recovery, on occasion one finds other treasures in food bins. People will throw away just about anything nameable, Forrest says, on one occasion he found a perfectly good folding camp chair, another time an atomic clock, still ticking, and still in its original packaging. Places around the university are good for furniture and dry goods, he notes, especially in the spring on move-out days.

Perhaps one of the oddest things to show up in one of Forrest's dives was found a few weeks before Christmas: two small cardboard boxes, still wrapped in holiday

see Dumpster, page 10



Progressive Kick hopes to tip the balance for progressive candidates in key state races

By Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

While some Democrats are slumped in over the kitchen table, clutching their heads and bemoaning what they fear is going to be a loss at the polls next month, other organizations are working for a decisive victory.

Progressive Kick is one such organization that realizes this election will have dire consequences on state and national politics for the next decade if conservatives are elected. And that group is throwing its weight - and its funding - at selected candidates who are proven to be genuinely progressive, and are in tight races in key states.

Michigan is one of the states that *Progressive Kick* has targeted. The organization selected just four candidates to support, and has promised to match any donations to these candidates. That means a donation of \$100 to one of these candidates will instantly become \$200, and even smaller donations of \$25 will immediately become \$50.

"It's a win-win for both the candidates and their supporters," said Margy Long, campaign manager for Christine Green, candidate for State Representative in Michigan's 52nd District. "Progressive Kick is comprised of a group of donors who understand the importance of electing these candidates. The response we've gotten to their offer to match funds has been amazing, so it's clear that voters do care."

Just why does *Progressive Kick* view this election as being of dire importance?

Below is a quote from Karl Rove, discussing how a political party can save millions of dollars if they can use redistricting as a way to stack the deck in their favor:

"The average winner of a competitive House race in 2008 spent \$2 million, while a non-competitive seat can be defended for far less than half that amount. Moving, say, 20 districts from competitive to out-of-reach could save a party \$100 million or more over the course of a decade."

— **GOP strategist, Karl Rove**

Whichever party controls the Michigan Legislature next year will have significant

control over drawing district lines.

With \$125,000 to donate to progressive candidates, *Progressive Kick*, along with local donors, is in a position to help candidates secure a victory instead of a narrow defeat.

As election day grows closer, some campaigns get nastier. Mark Ouimet, for example, who is running against Green, has approved robocalls and election brochures that accuse Green of not paying taxes.

"In the 1980's, when I was a student at the University of Michigan, and my husband was working hard to establish his practice in Ann Arbor, we got behind in our taxes," Green explained. "All of these taxes, plus interest, were paid in full by 1989, more than two decades ago!"

"This just shows how out of touch Ouimet is," said Kim Easter, a volunteer coordinator for Green. "Christine has gone through hard times and survived them, grown from them and become a stronger person. She can relate to voters who are going through the exact same thing right now."

Progressive Kick chose the following candidates in Michigan based on the following information. These candidates are fighting a well-funded Michigan Republican Party, and can use the extra donations to set the record straight. Candidate information below was compiled by *Progressive Kick*, not Groundcover News.

To learn more about *Progressive Kick*, or to donate to one of the candidates chosen by the group, go to: www.progressivekick.org



Jocelyn Benson, candidate for Secretary of State

Jocelyn is an election law professor at Wayne State University who actually has written a book on how Secretary of States can make the electoral system more transparent, accountable, and accessible. In 2008, Jocelyn's opponent, Oakland County Clerk Ruth Johnson, said it was okay for voters to be challenged at the polls just because their homes were in foreclosure — Jocelyn stood up and said it was wrong.



Art Reyes, candidate for State Representative, District 51

Art has spent his life fighting for the rights of workers and is a life-long resident of Genesee County. He is running against a sitting state representative who spent most of 2010 running for another job and whose big crusade is advocating against transgendered individuals changing their sex on their driver's licenses



Christine Green, candidate for State Representative, 52nd District

Christine has practiced law in Washtenaw County for 25 years. As an attorney, she has championed civil rights and the fair treatment of employees and is a board member of Planned Parenthood Mid-Michigan Alliance. Christine's opponent, Mark Ouimet, is a self-financing member of the Republican establishment which has continued to wreck the state; he is part of a growing number of anti-choice candidates in Michigan.



Dian Slavens, candidate for State Representative, District 21

Dian's a respiratory therapist who has seen firsthand the struggles families face in obtaining access to affordable healthcare. During her first term she has been a standup leader and strong vote for progressive issues — even at times when the issue would cause her potential trouble back home.

Help the homeless make the transition to "home-more."

SUPPORT GROUNDCOVER NEWS

Become a sponsor, or buy an ad in the newspaper. Groundcover News gives homeless persons the chance to become independent vendors and earn money, while making the transition to regular employment and housing.

contact@groundcovernews.com

Groundcover Vendors Code of Conduct

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization, and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

Every vendor reads and signs the code of conduct before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues

of Groundcover News.

- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.

- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.

- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors, respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.

- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Ground-

cover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.

- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.

- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.

- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.

- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: contact@groundcovernews.com

Groundcover vendor Rissa is healing herself with a positive attitude

By Susan Beckett
Publisher

Meet Rissa, whose smiling face and offers of, "Get your copy of Groundcover," often greet people on Fourth Avenue on their way to the Farmer's Market or People's Food Co-op. After her smile and warm dark eyes, people notice her cane, but there is so much more to Rissa than that.

An incurable optimist, she is fighting her way back from a crippling condition brought on by too many hours hunched over a computer. "I go after Moby Dick with my tartar sauce," spouts Rissa, quoting her mentor, motivational speaker Zig Ziglar. "I believe if you tell yourself you can, your brain starts figuring out how to do it, but if you tell yourself you can't, your brain figures out why you can't."

"When you're your own boss, there's no floor, but there's also no ceiling. That's why I think Groundcover is so neat."

— Rissa the vendor

Rissa's brain is currently working on establishing her as a corporate trainer or teaching at any level.

Earlier in her life, she graduated from the Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw and headed to MSU where she majored in Economics on the advice of her counselors, and minored in music education, following her passions for teaching and music. An accomplished pianist, she also played saxophone and sang with every choir she could find.

With no real interest in economics, she left MSU prior to graduation. She got her real estate license and financial planning training and worked in those fields for a while she and her family raised her young son. She left for Texas when he was eight and got a job she loved, tutoring at-risk kids. Three of the 4th - 6th graders she tutored ultimately got university scholarships. She then tutored adults in transition from laboring to office jobs and helped them acquire the necessary computer skills. During this time she received her Microsoft Certification.

Good jobs as a Quality Control Analyst for Texas Instruments and Frito Lay followed, along with returning to school to complete her bachelors degree. After receiving her B.S. in Technical Management from De Vry University in Richardson, Texas, Rissa started their MBA program. Several times as she was walking, she fell for no apparent reason. Her condition continued to worsen and eventually she was bound to a wheelchair.

Emergency room doctors assured her she was not suffering a stroke, but could not explain why she fell. They had her taking 11 medications but had no diagnosis. One evening on her way to a restaurant for lemon chicken, the only parking spot she could find was in front of an office. Rissa noticed that along with the letters DDC, indicating a doctor of chiropractic medicine, were other letters she was unfamiliar with. On a sudden impulse she entered the office to find out what kind of doctor this was. Her eyes locked onto the posted doctor's quote, "The physicians of the future will not dispense medicines as much as teach patients to live healthily."

The friendly office staff explained that the doctor was also a nutritionist and neurologist and could help her with her problem and did not mind that she did not have insurance. Their x-rays showed her L4 and L5 vertebrae were crushed, probably because her over-40 body could not handle a string of all-nighters crouched over the computer. Messages from her brain could no longer be smoothly transmitted to her legs.

Halfway through the projected six months of treatment she was feeling much better, though still wheelchair bound. Her mother needed help and Rissa returned to Michigan to take care of her. She arrived at the start of a brutal winter that kept her housebound for three months, during which time atrophy set in and all the gains she made in Texas were lost. She found a similar chiropractor and started over on the treatments.

That spring, she started losing control of her hands and went to the University of Michigan Hospital to see if it was connected to the problems with her legs. They found her blood sugar and thyroid levels were out of whack but could not come up with a clear diagnosis for the problems with her extremities. They worked on the symptoms and when they wanted to give her medications to avoid the deep vein thrombosis that often results



Groundcover vendor Rissa, selling a paper with a smile in downtown Ann Arbor

from not walking, Rissa begged them instead to help her walk again. She got excellent physical and occupation therapy that helped her make the transition to a walker.

Upon her release, she had nowhere to go. Her unemployment insurance had run out, her mother and brothers did not know how to cope with her as an invalid and her son was a college student in Texas. Having been a caretaker all her life and never needing government help before, being dependent did not come easily to Rissa.

An excellent U-M social worker helped her apply for assistance and started the process of finding her permanent housing. Meanwhile, she was transferred to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County facility, the Delonis Center. With no extra staffing to accommodate special needs, Rissa had to adhere to the same rigid schedule as the rest of the residents. Staff on the 4th floor helped her as much as they could but it took her nearly three hours just to get out of bed, wash and get dressed. She was written up a couple of times for not leav-

ing the floor on time and it was difficult to get to meals on time but she credits that push with making her stronger.

"I never would have chosen this way to go but I am so glad I did because otherwise I never would have met so many blessed people. I believe you have to bloom where you are planted."

A member of the Delonis staff gave her a keyboard which Rissa uses for finger limbering and making music, though she cannot play like she used to. Through positive thinking, hard work and good chiropractic care, Rissa has left the walker behind and now walks with the aid of a cane and can negotiate stairs slowly. She considers her work selling papers as part of her therapy. It pushes her to move more and gives her a reason to go out, walk and talk with people. When she first started selling, she could not turn quickly enough to catch the attention of passersby. Now she swivels from side to side, easily engaging pedestrians in conversation and has built a loyal customer base.

see Rissa, page 8



Proudly Serving
ANN ARBOR
and all surrounding
areas for over 30 years!

MAIN STREET T-SHIRTS
220 S. Main St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104 P. 734.994.9898

Harvesting the Grapes of Rights

A grape-picking party doubles as a fundraiser to build awareness for immigrant rights

By Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

The fragrance of concord grapes permeated rows of vines, teasing the olfactory senses of grape pickers as they moved up and down the rows, snipped deep purple clusters and dropped them in a bucket. Above them on the hillside a mariachi band played lively music while dancers twirled around the makeshift plywood dance floor. New arrivals greeted friends and relatives in Spanish or English, depending on their fluency and native origins.

It could well have been a scene straight from Napa Valley, but it was a gathering of friends and neighbors at Chantina Vineyard, which is tucked unobtrusively in a quiet residential neighborhood of Ann Arbor just a few blocks off Main Street.

The fall grape-picking party is an annual tradition for Laura Sanders, owner of the small neighborhood vineyard for the past 13 years. But this year — as she did last year — Sanders added a new element to the event. She added immigrants, and immigrant rights. Along with Margaret Harner, the two women founded the Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrants Rights, an organization which aids illegal immigrants who have been treated abusively or wrongfully detained.

"We've had 200 cases since we started two years ago," said Sanders, explaining that an instance of detaining an immigrant worker doesn't count as a case unless there is an eye witness to abuse by an ICE officer (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) or the immigrant can personally testify of abuse or wrongdoing.

"We got involved because we kept hearing terrible stories of immigrants in Pittsfield Township being seized from their homes and detained," Harner said. "Usually the person being detained is the bread winner of the family, so when they're detained or deported, they leave behind a wife and children who have no means to support themselves. It's crazy."

There were also alleged cases of women being detained and separated from their children, who were placed in foster care.

"These raids are demoralizing and a viola-

tion of human rights," Harner said.

Immigration laws and illegal immigrants are divisive issues that tend to polarize people. When asked why U.S. citizens have such a strong reaction one way or the other to illegal immigrants, Harner said, "This is the civil rights movement of our time. Whenever you oppress one group of people, you're endorsing the oppression of any group of people, anytime."

When Harner, Sanders and her partner Romero Martinez founded the coalition, they had 14 other organizations working with them. The number has grown to 30, and includes a wide assortment of churches, nonprofits and socially progressive organizations.

While Sanders and Harner talked, grape pickers ascended the hill and headed for the garage, where a long table laden with Mexican and American food was waiting.

In the side yard, children dressed in colorful Mexican dance costumes twirled and jumped in rhythm, en-

tertaining groups of people who were stemming grapes and tossing them into a kiddie wading pool, where they would soon be stomped.

The bucolic tableau of Mexicans and Americans working, eating, and dancing together was in sharp contrast to the stories Harner and Sanders painted of the ICE officers and local law enforcement who pounded on doors, barged in and separated children from mothers, and fathers from families.

The organization has first-hand accounts of ICE officers entering homes without legal warrants, beating people to the ground, terrorizing children by attacking their parents, ransacking and damaging people's property, and using excessive intimidation.

Their reports indicate that once detained, immigrants are denied rights to clean

clothes, money, healthcare, or access to legal assistance.

"Our organization wants to help with these people's immediate needs," Harner said. "People working here need to have their rights honored. These immigrant workers add to the structure of our economy, and it would be a disaster if they all left."

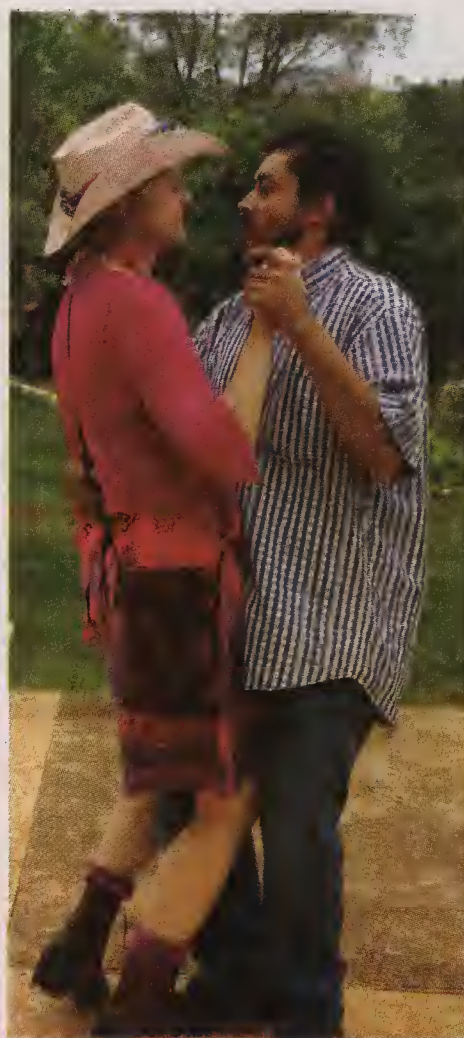
By assigning an urgent response team to each case, the organization can provide safety, advocacy and resources to raid victims and their families.

"We support immigration reform, of course, but we also reject immigration policies that are based on fear and racial profiling," Sanders said.

As the afternoon light faded, adults and children removed socks and shoes and washed their feet before stepping into kiddie pools filled with grapes. Bare feet squished through the purple pulp, children squealed and adults laughed.

For one day and one evening, grape harvesting and wine-making blended seamlessly with interracial respect and cooperation.

To make a donation to the Coalition, please make checks payable to: Ypsilanti First Congregational United Church of Christ Immigration Project, and mail to: PO Box 980413, Ypsilanti, MI 48198. All funds go entirely to help immigrant families. **Contact:** msharner@comcast.net, or createcoun@comcast.net



Clockwise, from top: Laura Sanders dances with her partner Ramero Martinez; kids dancing to mariachi band; women and kids gather around a kiddie pool to stem grapes in preparation for stomping; a little girl waits for her turn on the dance floor.

Sudoku

★★★★★ 4puz.com

4		3	8			5		
		8					9	
1				4				
			5			1		
7	1						3	6
		9			6			
				9				8
	5					3		
		6			7	4		1

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

ACROSS

1. Addiction
6. Rosalind Russell role
10. Ruth's nickname
14. Pertaining to sheep
15. Of the mouth
16. Habanera, for example
17. Dorothy's superfluous observation
20. Time period
21. Oyster habitat
22. Gaggle members
23. AFL partner
25. Chemical suffix
27. The Witch's veiled threat: "I can ____ too"
35. Member of genus Acer
36. Caravel
37. Heal
38. First name of advice columnist Ann Landers
39. Dry, as wine
40. Inclement weather
41. Woody's son
42. Duck
43. Roof parts
44. The Wizard's ineffectual misdirection: "____ to that man..."
47. Astronaut Grissom
48. Sensory organ
49. Alpha Vulpeculae, star
53. Uncooked
55. Singer Reed
58. The Lion's fervent conviction: "I do ____"
63. Predator's home
64. Eager
65. Large airport
66. Small (suffix)
67. C, for one
68. Teutonic god

DOWN

1. Red Wing Gordie
2. Attest
3. Shona religious ceremony
4. Chemical suffix
5. Big ____
6. Speck
7. Dry, as a desert
8. Isle of ____
9. Moose
10. Nemesis

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17					18				19			
20					21				22			
			23	24			25	26				
	27	28			29	30			31	32	33	34
35					36				37			
38					39				40			
41					42				43			
44				45				46				
			47					48				
49	50	51	52			53	54			55	56	57
58					59	60			61	62		
63					64				65			
66					67				68			

11. Butt
12. Statistical distortion
13. Effortlessness
18. Woodwind
19. Old
23. Philippines town
24. "____," said the blind man
25. Frozen drip
26. Salsa, perhaps
27. It's o *Wonderful Life* director
28. Use, as glue
29. Possessions
30. Gain an unfair advantage
31. Pastry
32. ____ Laredo, Mexico
33. Wooden objects
34. Theatrical needs
35. Standardized test for Michigan students (abbr.)
40. Bristle
42. Greek letter
45. Shrek, for one
46. Information of a sort
49. Skillful
50. Tidy
51. Cut
52. Ireland, to the Irish
53. Mob activity
54. Italian painter Francesco
55. Temporary gift
56. Vegetable
57. Manipulator
59. Actor Johnson
60. Self
61. Seed case
62. Interjection

Cryptoquotes

Figure out the encryption code to solve the puzzle

"STW VYSTWZ YR ZWNYELSJYC ICK DZJWV JP QYNWZSB." — IZJPSYSEW

HCWE VEW YVVK VD CSOOAEWFF XZVFWF, SEVJCWK VOWEF; LIJ VDJWE HW

ZVVU FV ZVEQ SJ JCW XZVFWY YVVK JCSJ HW YV EVJ FWW JCW VEW

HCAXC CSF LWWE VOWEY DVK IF." — CWZWE UWZZWK

Rissa runs her People's Enterprise

continued from page 8

She was enchanted with the idea of being a Groundcover vendor from the moment she first heard about it. In high school she dreamed of owning her own business which she named "People's Enterprise." "When you're your own boss, there's no floor, but there's also no ceiling," Rissa opines. "That's why I think Groundcover is so neat.

There's no ceiling. Another thing I love about this paper is you get to meet so many people!"

Rissa recently counseled another vendor, "Don't spend your energy on stuff you can't do nothing about. The past is gone, concentrate on the future!" Even with a cane, she walks the walk that goes with the talk.



Bethlehem United Church of Christ
423 S. Fourth Avenue
between William and Packard
www.bethlehem-ucc.org
(734) 665-6149

Sundays:

8:30 am ~ Choir
8:30 am and 10:00 am ~ Worship
10:00 am ~ Church School
10:00 am ~ Young Adult Forum
11:30 am ~ Youth Fellowship

Upcoming Events:

October 10 ~ Pastor Brunell's Installation ~ 2:00 pm
November 6 ~ Saturday Worship ~ 5:15 pm
November 12 ~ Bazaar/Bake Sale ~ 10:00 am
November 12 ~ Luncheon ~ 11:30 am
(tickets are \$9.00 ~ open to the public)
November 27 ~ Hanging of the Greens ~ 9:00 am

an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy

From safe house to blues club

Ann Arbor woman makes it in the Chicago Blues scene

By Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

At 17, Ann Arbor's Wendy Hayes was already a talented musician, but her life was in complete discord.

She had become enmeshed in an abusive relationship with a much older man, and her dysfunctional family was unable to provide her with the emotional support or help she needed to survive.

So the young woman found herself living in a women's domestic violence shelter even though she was technically too young to be there.

"I knew living at home would be a total disaster for me," she said. "They made it work, somehow, since I was really too old for foster care and too young to be an adult on my own."

While living in the shelter, Hayes studied for her GED, and did very well on the final exam. Counselors at the shelter encouraged her to apply to Washtenaw Community College, where she was accepted. She was immediately drawn to classes in sociology, social sciences, psychology and women's studies.

"I had no idea people actually studied

things that I had lived through," Hayes said, amazement still echoing in her voice. "I did really well in those classes and got my associate's degree."

She was then urged to apply to the University of Michigan, where she was accepted and earned a degree in Psychology.

While in college, Hayes played bass in a number of area bands, including The Terraplanes and the Danny Pratt Band. She branched out and traveled to Detroit to play blues with seasoned veterans of the musical genre.

It was there that she met Murali Coryell, son of Larry Coryell, famous blues musician. She was invited to go on tour with him, which took them to major venues in New York and Chicago.

"In New York we opened for B.B. King," Hayes said. "That was one of the highlights of my life."

Playing in Chicago, Hayes realized she'd found a town big enough for her aspirations and close enough to Ann Arbor to be an ideal place to live. From that point on, she worked single-mindedly to make it as a musician in Chicago.

"I had my successes and my challenges,"

she said. "Sometimes I was sleeping in my car or crashing on other people's couches, but there were really inspiring times too."

Chicago is known for its blues scene, and anyone who's been there can tell you that most blues musicians are men.

"It was really hard to break into a new scene, especially in a highly male dominated scene, which is blues."

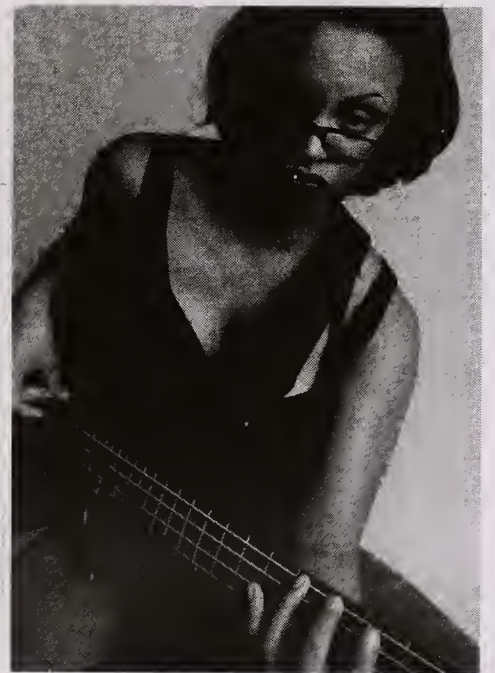
Although she also performs an eclectic variety of music, including jazz and neo-soul, she made a name for herself in Chicago playing and singing the blues. Now she branching out and promoting her new band, Liquid Hayes.

She has enough work now to feel somewhat more comfortable about her circumstances. She plays every Wednesday at Kingston Mines, Chicago's oldest and largest blues club, with Maurice John Vaughn.

Liquid Hayes is expected to be a regular performer on Mondays at The Homestead.

Even though musical success is becoming a reality for Hayes, she isn't sure it's what she wants to do for the rest of her life.

"Music is one of my loves, but I also have a



Wendy Hayes, bass guitarist, jazz and neo-soul singer, sociologist and blues star

love for sociology," she said. "I would like to go back and get a Master's Degree someday, if I could figure out the student loans."

Until then, Hayes will continue to make music and do what will be best for her, both professionally and personally.

"If I had any words of wisdom to give to people who are homeless or going through a rough time, it would be to surround yourself with people who are supportive of you and have your best interests at heart."

Book Review

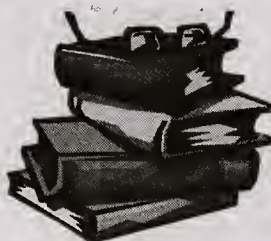
The Icarus Syndrome- A History of American Hubris - by Peter Beinart, copyright 2010

Reviewed by David KE Dodge

This moving, almost exciting, book recounts intellectual trends that proved critical in influencing U.S. foreign and military policy from the time of Woodrow Wilson up to the beginning of Barack Obama's current term in office. Mr. Beinart's convincing thesis is that the prevailing public mood of particular generations at a particular point in time, is often based in the foreign and military policy successes and blunders which informed their world view in an earlier time, especially when those generations were coming of age. This is especially so when evaluating looming threats from abroad and our appropriate response.

For example, the early period of Colin Powell's term as Secretary of State was spent largely resisting the inexorable march of the George W. Bush Administration toward war in Iraq. In his early career, Powell had seen too many filled body bags in Vietnam and recalled too vividly the quagmire in which his nation found itself during the war in Vietnam.

Another example is found in the relationship between the age of Democratic members of the House of Representatives and their participation in the 2002 vote to authorize the George W. Bush Admin-



istration to go to war in Iraq. 58% of the Democrats aged 45 and under voted in favor of the authorization, while only 35% of those over 45 so voted. The 58% is a group of people who were 15 or under as the Vietnam War came to a close in 1972, too young to be fundamentally impacted in their world view by the national trauma of that war. However, they were old enough to remember the bloodless fall of Soviet Communism, successful US military interventions in the Gulf War, and the break-up of Yugoslavia.

Since the USA became a "player" in world affairs around the beginning of the twentieth century, the U.S. public mood has vacillated between near isolationism (or, at least, reticence to use military power,) and military adventurism. The tragedy of U.S. Foreign Policy is that many Americans have no more extensive knowledge of U.S. history, and the valuable wisdom it offers, than what they collect during their personal lifetimes, from their own personal experiences. The result is that the United States of America reels like a drunken soldier on a storm-tossed ship, from reluctantly using military power even when such usage might save lives, to being enchanted to war by bellicosity on the part of their leaders. Perhaps history deserves more attention in our public schools.

If my review does not inspire you to read *The Icarus Syndrome*, then read the introduction in the book. It sold me on reading the entire text.

To Alex: On the event of your high school graduation

I am a poor woman
gnawing on borrowed spoons.
I have only this to tell you:
be the hero of your own life,
like Dickens, or his David.
Isn't it enough to say
the world touches you?
That's what we do to stay sane,
play Beethoven 9 loud, to the city skies,
sing in bass tones,
run so fast darkness can't grab hold,
love so much it won't want to.
Yours is a glimpse of heaven's face.
My sadness is not your legacy.
So much light stays in all of us, the authentic, the good.
Keep all the green shoots.
Keep your own fire.

Karen L. Totten

Robert's Road to Recovery

My name is Robert J. and I have had serious problems with drugs and alcohol. Thank god I am in "recovery" now and am enjoying life free from drugs and alcohol!

My journey into the darkness and despair of addiction began in my teens and progressed to homelessness this year. My drinking and using has taken me from prominent roles as leader of major human service organizations in this country and Canada to the streets, various treatment facilities, and the Delonis shelter here in Ann Arbor. The disease of addiction has taken everything from me including my homes, cars, children and many jobs.

Certainly not all homeless, unemployed, or poor people suffer from addiction. However, a substantial percentage of us have this medical disease. Fortunately, here in Washtenaw County we have a GREAT recovery community!! We are very lucky to have so many opportunities to participate in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings and events. Our recovery community, I believe, is among the strongest and most vibrant in the country!!

We have a new AA meeting in Ann Arbor that stands out because it is the first on-campus meeting, sanctioned by the University of Michigan, in several years. The meeting was founded by a

recovering person named Jennifer and is held on Tuesday evenings at the Michigan Union at 7:30pm. The meeting is open to all interested in staying sober, and has the potential to impact many students and non-students alike.

Many other meetings held every day of the year can be found on the Huron Valley Intergroup website www.hvai.org. Another worldwide resource is www.aa.org (AA World Services) where meetings from around the world can be found. The Huron Valley Intergroup phone number is 734.482.0707 and the office is open Tuesday-Friday 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. The HELPLine phone number is 734.482-5700.

I struggle with my disease daily, and go to meetings (AA/NA) every day. I also work with a sponsor on the 12 steps of AA, and believe in a "higher power". These tools have worked for many alcoholics and addicts around the world since the 1930's, and are working for me. I presently live in transitional housing with other recovering men, and that helps a lot!

My disease is not my fault, but my recovery is MY responsibility! I am very lucky to live in such a great recovery community and to have found purpose with the Groundcover News. Trying to rebuild my life in middle age is NOT easy, but with help, I am very hopeful about a bright future!

Dumpster, from page 4

paper and addressed "To Trisha from Santa." Inside were the wooden pegs and metal fittings (ones) one would find in an accessory package with pieces of assemble-it-yourself furniture, as from Ikea. The rest of the gift and the rest of its story are left to speculation.

Lukas has had similar luck finding useable throwaways—a quality shoulder bag in good condition and a tie, for more formal occasions. His favorite find, though, was a whole cake, untouched, ready to eat.

To establish how much perfectly good stuff is thrown away each day in America—estimates are about 4 ½ pounds per person, per day—some friends of Forrest's from California outfitted an entire empty apartment in fewer than 3 months with items they rescued from dumpsters—furniture, dishes, clothing, food and even art supplies. Here is a link to the movie they made of their experience:

www.snagfilms.com/films/title/I_love_trash/

Of course, for some people, dumpster diving is not an option because they can't get past the queasiness invoked by eating something thrown into a trash bin. But according to both Forrest and Lukas, the food pulled out of the bins is perfectly good.

For a variety of reasons, stores either cannot sell the discarded merchandise any longer or are making way for new product. Locally, many stores participate in Food Gatherers as a way to handle excess food. Nonetheless, plenty still ends up in dumpsters.

Forrest advises a check to ensure boxes are not open and packages are not torn, places where bacteria could enter. Often, stores will purge items that are at their sell-by date, but the sell date means the item will still be usable and fresh for a few more days.

And there is the tingle test for meat. Forrest is a vegetarian but his friends have told him that if, when touching the tip of one's tongue on a piece of dumpster meat the tongue tingles, the meat is likely not safe to eat. Other kinds of spoilage are more obvious—bloated cartons and cans or that recognizable, distinctive sour milk smell. "You just don't take those things," Forrest notes. He has a pair of gloves he usually wears to keep his hands off possible pieces of broken glass or anything truly gross, but finds that other special equipment is not needed.

Dumpstering is usually done at night. Most divers go after stores have closed and employees have locked up, to avoid confrontations and to protect the employees from getting in trouble if, as in the case of some stores, they are sympathetic to the process but unwilling to flat out condone it. Forrest has been asked to leave a few times, or come back later, but neither he nor Lukas has ever encountered the police. Of the one situation Forrest has heard of where friends met the police, the group was left to their activity after the police established they were not making drug deals or trying to break into the store.

In the *I Love Trash* film, archeologist Dr. Timothy Jones states that dumpster diving is a modern manifestation of work that has gone on for centuries—the rag pickers, the metal collectors, who derived reasonable incomes from these activities. Others see the practice as unclean, with inherent risks for disease. One only has to remember the mountains of trash upon which the children played in the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, to feel that scavenging as a way of life is not the most desirable.

Environmentally friendly act? Necessity for many who are hungry? Usable goods for practically nothing? Dumpster diving is many things, but not easily dismissed.



TEN THOUSAND
VILLAGES.

Making a difference in the world — making a difference in Ann Arbor!

Ten Thousand Villages provides vital, fair income to Third World people by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America.

Ten Thousand Villages works with artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed.

This income helps pay for food, education, health care and housing.

303 S. Main Street Ann Arbor, MI 48104

734-332-1270

annarbor.tenthousandvillages.com

Join us in supporting local organizations that are vital to those in need.

- CROP Walk, ending hunger globally and locally. October 10, 1:30. Zion Lutheran Church. Register at ICPJ.org
- Filling Empty Bowls, an elegant evening enjoying food, music and a silent auction of unique bowls, benefitting SOS. Tickets are \$100 per person. More information at soscs.org
- 5th Annual Vampires' Ball: A Benefit for Food Gatherers on October 27 at 6:30 p.m. Hosted by Zingerman's Roadhouse. Tickets available at the Roadhouse or by calling Food Gatherers, 761-2796
- November 13th, 8:00 pm, PBS radio show, *The Story*, and afterglow at the amphitheater in the U-M Rackham Building, to benefit Avalon Housing.

Become part of the Groundcover Gang!

Our next volunteer meeting is at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 2 at First Baptist Church, Ann Arbor. Along with writers and vendor support people, we are looking for people with a business background to help with financial planning and business tool setup.

Local food movement adds meat to the menu

By Susan Beckett
Publisher

When local businessman Bill Taylor devoured *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, it nurtured his latent interest in local food and catalyzed a new business venture, Eat Local Eat Natural (ELEN). This Dexter resident had already co-founded, run and sold a very successful business, Colorbok Paper Products, which went from a two person operation in 1984 to a company with a couple of hundred employees and a broad array of products when it was sold in 2003. Released from his golden handcuffs in 2006, Taylor settled into retirement with an eye out for what he would next pursue.

The Omnivore's Dilemma started him rethinking his relationship with food and how he could help reverse the trends he found most alarming; the environmental impact and inhumane treatment of factory farmed animals, the decreasing healthfulness of food, and the disintegration of the local economy. He began looking for where there was a need for more ethically raised foods and where there were resources available that he could connect to the needs.

While restaurateurs and grocers could buy fresh produce directly from local growers, obtaining ethically produced protein was more problematic. The processing procedures and handling needs made direct observation and transportation of the product overly time consuming.

Taylor found the need for a supply of ethically raised protein sources in restaurants and specialty grocery stores



Bill Taylor, co-owner, stands in front of a billboard for the new business

from Ann Arbor to Detroit and its suburbs. Locally, his many customers include the Black Pearl in downtown Ann Arbor, the Gandy Dancer and Carson's American Cafe a little farther out, Beezy's Cafe and Terry B's in Ypsilanti, and grocery stores like the People's Food Co-op, Arbor Farms and Plum Market. (A more complete list can be found on the website, www.eatlocaleatnatural.com.)

The resources are all within a 150 mile radius of Ann Arbor to minimize the carbon footprint of transportation. He gets Amish eggs and chicken from a farm in Homer and processed meats from a plant in Yale, Michigan. Pork and poultry hail from northern Indiana and shrimp are raised in salt water tanks in "the cleanest shrimp farm in the world" in Okemos.

Having identified the need and the resources, Taylor and his partners, Scott Aikens and Tim Redmond, formed their company about two and a half years ago. The biggest problem they encountered initially was that their customers expected their products to be cheaper since the transportation costs would be less, but in fact, their products were more expensive than what their clients had been buying. The additional costs come from the greatly increased acreage needed for natural grazing, and if feed is involved, for buying organic, natural, non-genetically modified food sources for the animals. Also, no growth hormones are used to hurry the animals to maturity.

Consumer awareness of the health benefits

of buying naturally raised products and prioritization of ethical and environmentally sustainable animal husbandry, has created more demand for the products of ELEN.

"In the last six months, we've been flooded with calls from people wanting to carry our products," Taylor said. He credits books like *Fast Food Nation* and Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, along with the local food movement, for changing the way we look at food and its sources.

Of personal concern to Taylor is the issue of food security. He noted that grocery stores have about a three-day supply of food on their shelves. With most food coming from long distances, he worries about what would happen if the supply chain were disrupted. He estimates that even in the summer, only one percent of local food needs could be met with the products raised in a 150 radius of Ann Arbor. He is looking to be part of raising to 10 percent the amount of local need that is met by local sources.

Having recently bought a second refrigerated truck and increasing the number of employees to four, ELEN is moving in that direction. They are now a sustainable business with a clear mission and values to share. They encourage everyone to "Buy Local" because it protects the environment, uses fewer fossil fuels, is more humane, is healthier, connects the consumer to the community, circulates money within the community, which leads to greater shared prosperity, supports small family farms, and moves toward attaining food security.

Puzzle solutions from page 8

Cryptoquotes

"The mother of revolution and crime is poverty."

— Aristotle

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us."

— Helen Keller

4	9	3	8	6	2	5	1	7
5	6	8	7	1	3	2	9	4
1	7	2	9	4	5	8	6	3
6	3	4	5	7	9	1	8	2
7	1	5	4	2	8	9	3	6
8	2	9	1	3	6	7	4	5
3	4	7	2	9	1	6	5	8
2	5	1	6	8	4	3	7	9
9	8	6	3	5	7	4	2	1

H	A	B	I	T	M	A	M	E	B	A	B	E
O	V	I	N	E	O	R	A	L	A	R	I	A
W	E	R	E	N	O	T	I	N	K	A	N	S
E	R	A	B	E	D	G	E	E	S	E		
			C	I	O	I	D	E				
	C	A	U	S	E	A	C	C	I	D	E	N
M	A	P	L	E	S	H	I	P	C	U	R	E
E	P	P	I	E	S	E	C	S	L	E	E	T
A	R	L	O	T	E	A	L	E	A	V	E	S
P	A	Y	N	O	A	T	T	E	N	T	I	O
			G	U	S	E	A	R				
A	N	S	E	R	R	A	W	L	O	U		
B	E	L	I	E	V	E	I	N	S	P	O	O
L	A	I	R	A	G	O	G	O	H	A	R	E
E	T	T	E	N	O	T	E	D	O	N	A	R

The danger of writing cover letters too soon



Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

Like many of my fellow residents in the state of Michigan, I went through a painful layoff in 2009. Now that I've put some distance between that

terrible day and today, I can see

some of the obvious mistakes I made, largely because I was freshly unemployed and feeling about as valuable as a 56-year-old kumquat. I will share some advice I learned along the way. But if you follow my advice and things don't go as you hoped, don't blame me. I cannot be held responsible for anyone who actually thinks I know what I'm talking about.

Soon after you've been laid off, you will have a compulsive urge to to immediately dust off your resume, make some updates and tackle writing cover letters. After all, you're in full panic mode, your brain is reeling in shock, and you believe the only available job left in the State of Michigan might have an application deadline coming up in the next 12 minutes.

Don't do it.

During those first few weeks of unemployment, you will experience a huge crisis of confidence. You will be demoralized. Despair will keep rolling over you like the gray rinse water in a front-loading washing machine. It's understandable, but

it doesn't make for a good frame of mind for writing cover letters.

So my advice is, put the pen down and slowly walk away. Don't make any sudden movements, including writing cover letters or applying for any jobs in your first few weeks of unemployment, or it could look like this:

"Dear Person-With-The-Low-Paying-Job-That-Kinda-Fits-My-Qualifications:

"I am eagerly applying for the job you recently posted online for a Blankety-Blank staff person.

"I believe I am ideally suited for this position, based on my skills and prior work experience. Well, maybe not ideally suited, because one of your job requirements states that you are looking for someone with proven successful management skills. I don't really know if my management skills are proven to be successful. I've only managed a few people, plus an intern, and I don't think interns count as people. I think they all liked me but that could be because I occasionally dropped the F-bomb when we went out for cocktails after work and they found that quite charming and hilarious, coming from a woman my age.

"I don't manage my Jack Russell Terrier very well at all. The only way I can get control of him is to put one of those dog zapper collars on him and zap him when he misbehaves. Do you allow zapper collars at your workplace?

"Your job posting also stated that you're looking for someone with excellent organizational skills.

"Just how strictly do you define 'excellent'?

"I'm reasonably organized when it comes to filing paperwork. Retrieving it is another matter, since my filing system is based on whatever is foremost in my mind the moment I create the file. For example - some people would file graphic designs for a client in a file called 'Graphic Designs - Client Name.' I might file them alphabetically under C for 'Cool drop shadow graphics.' But only if it had a cool drop shadow.

"I also really need one of my desk drawers to be a junk drawer where I keep my Slim Fast power protein bars, a red rubber clown nose, change for the soda machine and little scribbled slips of paper that I probably don't need but keep 'just in case.'

"Sometimes those slips of paper turn out to be important and I can't find them in the junk drawer, but it's good to know they're in there somewhere.

"You mention in your job posting that you are looking for someone with design software skills, including Photoshop. I guarantee you I have mastered the liquify filter in Photoshop. I won't let anyone print or post a photo of me online until I have applied the liquify filter to my double chin and droopy eyelids. It's a great tool! I look almost normal after I use it on myself.

The rest of Photoshop is largely a mystery to me but I manage to muddle around in it fairly well by ignoring the most confusing tools.

You state that the person applying for this job must be a self-starter, able to work well without supervision. That is sooooo me! I prefer it that way - how else would I find time to do my banking online and email my best friend in St. Louis?

I am quite experienced in social networking, which I believe is corporate jargon for saying I'm good at goofing off online with Facebook friends. In fact, I recently became bilingual when I taught myself to translate lolcat speech into common English. But it's much funnier if you do it the other way around, trust me. Just google "I Can Has lolcat Translator" and you'll see what I mean.

"I hope you will consider me for this position, but I would understand if you don't. After all, I just got laid off and there are probably loads of younger, more talented people you could hire, so why waste your time interviewing me? But I sort of hope you will anyway.

"Sincerely,

"My Name but Please Don't Google It Because You Might Find Pictures of Me Drunkenly Kissing Peggy McCorkel Smack on the Lips At Our 25th High School Reunion."

Ann Arbor City Map



Eat and Shop

Notable Areas



Hand Carved Kisii Stone Heart
from Kenya

Share the Love Paperweight

During October, 100% of the profits from the purchase of these carved heart paperweights will go to benefit those in need in Ann Arbor.

Your purchase of this hand carved stone heart will help to provide food, healthcare, education and housing for our artisans in Kenya and also help to support those in need in Ann Arbor.

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
HARMONY MADE BY HAND
A Fair Trade Retailer

303 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI • 734.332.1270
annarbor.tenthousandvillages.com

SP43754